

**UDC: 37.018.43:004].09(100)**  
**(Professional paper)**

## **THE EFFICIENCY OF IMPLEMENTING PROGRAM CONTENT THROUGH DISTANCE LEARNING**

**Gzim Xhambazi, PhD,**  
**University of Tetova**  
[gezim.xhambazi@unite.edu.mk](mailto:gezim.xhambazi@unite.edu.mk)

**Abstract:** The organization of the educational process has no uniform past. Various social, economic, cultural and health circumstances have forced educational systems to organize and implement other forms of teaching in addition to direct forms. Extraordinary situations caused by various factors or war situations have caused partial or complete interruption of the educational process. From a didactic point of view, different ways of compensating for lost parts have been devised and put into operation. In didactics, condensed learning is known, as a form of teaching work through which only the most exemplary contents are realized. This year, the world faces a challenge that brought the entire globe to its knees. Education systems, which were forced to close schools to protect public health, were not ignored. For the first time in the history of teaching, the whole world organized distance learning for a very short time. The problems faced by educational systems in organizing distance learning are numerous, with the most important being the preparation of students for independent work and the criteria for selecting teaching content that must be implemented in the new circumstances. It is very difficult, almost impossible, in this way to realize the contents from all areas, which are equally important for the development of the individual.

**Keywords:** distance learning, teaching content, independent work

## **INTRODUCTION**

Defining the dimensions of education, i.e. the manifestation of the educational process in the development and formation of the individual-human, represents the essence of education as a whole. The educational process develops as an integral whole of all the essential aspects of the individual, such as: the intellectual aspect, the moral aspect, the aesthetic aspect, the physical and health aspect and the working aspect. These components, in the practice of educational work, intertwine with each other, with pronounced elements of one or the other, enabling the general development of the personality (Brada, 218: 2005). In the right pedagogical processes, at the same time physical tempering takes place, intellectual, moral, working and aesthetic development of the student. For these reasons, the curricula of

primary education include content from the social, natural-scientific, cultural and physical-health spheres. Expanding knowledge from different sciences accumulates by representing a serious problem, what should be included in existing curricula. Recently, new content is being added, which imposes the need to remove old content. This is a challenge that authority faces almost every year. When the pressure of society, science, and the labor market itself increases, then education is forced to change itself and adapt to real needs. In order to realize the goals that emerge from the curriculum, in schools, in addition to regular teaching forms, a number of other forms are applied, such as: teaching excursions, elective teaching, supplementary teaching, additional teaching, continuous teaching, etc. (Zulfiu, 274: 2001).

Teaching work in schools is a very specific activity, as the fulfillment and realization of learning goals is very complex. Inclusion in education increases school heterogeneity, adding to the complexity of the learning process. Therefore, distance learning also highlighted many issues that curriculum authorities need to take very seriously.

### **1. Criteria and directions for the selection of teaching content**

The main directions for the selection of teaching contents are the goals of education, i.e. school. When it comes to school, it means that the foundations of each individual's knowledge are provided. The concept of elementary education is based on the assumption that the individual who has acquired knowledge in school has the basic knowledge, skills and abilities which in any new situation will enable the expansion and enrichment of knowledge. Fundamental education does not mean gaining all the knowledge, skills and habits necessary for life, but only the basic ones. It is about the knowledge of life and society, and not about all world events and phenomena. Basic skills and habits should serve the individual as problem-solving skills, easier communication with the living environment, etc. This includes the development of the ability to adapt to everyday reality, society, nature, new technologies, etc. There is no precise definition that would determine what is elementary or fundamental to the knowledge of the sciences, which would provide the individual with adequate preparation for life and work.

In the field of science, society and art, new knowledge multiplies very quickly. Any prepared program becomes obsolete after one year, which means that the need for permanent inclusion of new discoveries in curricula is inalienable. It is evident that short-term curricula are doubled. The way out of this crisis (problem) is made possible by the principle of existentialism (lat. Exemplum- example, rule). The compilers of the curricula are required to select only representative examples from the fund of scientific knowledge and artistic creativity. These programs are updated from year to year with new representative examples, avoiding (removing) outdated or unimportant content. This principle enables the omission of didactic materialism.

The basic goal of exemplarism is to enable the uninterrupted inclusion of new wholes and subjects, both from the social and the natural-scientific field. It often happens that new program areas from the field of gender education, ecology, human rights, multicultural,

etc., are incorporated into existing fundamental subjects, such as biology, sociology, literature, etc.

Learning contents depending on the class can be formulated in different ways. The breadth of content is conditioned by the level of education, but also by other factors. In school practice, the integration of more programmatic integrals into a whole is known, especially in the initial grade of primary education; because children of this age see and know the world as a whole. Therefore, in the first level classes of primary education, the subject Natural Knowledge and Society was taught, as a whole or a single subject. At the second level, differentiation was made in two subjects, namely in Natural Knowledge and in Social Knowledge. In the third level of primary education, the differentiation of these subjects in more whole subjects continues, such as: biology, history, geography, physics, chemistry, etc. In secondary education, especially vocational secondary education, there is a further differentiation of wholes and subjects. (In this case it should be noted that from the school year 2014/15 the differentiation of subjects from the social field and subjects from the natural-scientific field begins in the first level of primary education. This school year, the subjects Society and Natural Science are taught as separate. The book Natural Sciences for the first, second and third grade has been prepared based on the Cambridge practice, and the teachers have attended adequate training for the most successful realization of these contents in the field of nature and science).

Curriculum plans should enable the standardization of learning organization in all schools. These standards apply to all students, although pedagogical practice shows that in the process of teaching work there are obvious differences in the psychophysical development of students from the same class. To mitigate this phenomenon, greater care is needed in the implementation of individualization of teaching work, in the use of appropriate methods and forms, i.e. all those that enable work according to the requirements of adapted programs. In distance learning, taking into account the large number of teaching followers, class students, it is impossible to implement the individualization of teaching work. Additional and supplementary lessons are presented as inalienable forms for mitigating differences in the levels of mastery of the teaching material.

### **1.1. Learning contents from the social and natural-scientific field**

Within the primary education, contents from different fields are realized. They mainly belong to the social and natural-scientific fields. (Bognar, 117: 1996) Initially, the subjects from the respective fields are generalized to the initial subjects Society and Natural Science. In the current classes, the subjects are differentiated, depending on the age and abilities of the students. Within the content of nature and society, parts of all subjects are elaborated. In the following we will focus on the complexity of the realization of the contents by some areas, especially for the impossibility of their realization in indirect form, i.e. through distance learning.

#### **1.1.1. Contents from geography**

Geography is the science of nature and natural and social phenomena in space.

In terms of size, space can be observed in three dimensions: one-dimensional space (distance), two-dimensional (surface) and three-dimensional (volume).

a) The first exercises for reading the map

The first exercises for reading the map include: orientation in space, knowledge of the relief and hydrography, exercises for measuring length and width, as well as modeling the relief and drawing sketches, plans and maps.

Enabling students to read the geographical map is a very complex process, so it requires the realization of preliminary exercises.

b) Orientation in space

Students knowing and being able to precisely identify the cardinal directions, represents the most important step in recognizing and reading the geographical map. This is made possible by classroom or outdoor exercises. The first exercises are performed with the help of the sun, trees, religious objects, etc.

c) Horizon and horizon line

Two important notions for the successful acquisition of knowledge by the natural sciences. Students are introduced to these notions in the first grades of primary education. The most successful realization of these contents is in nature, specifically higher places (hills...). Everything around us is called the horizon, the higher we climb, the wider the horizon. The part where it seems to us that the earth joins the sky is called the horizon line.

d) The plan and scale of reduction

It starts with working on the plan of small items (notebook, book), then onto making the plan of the blackboard, class...; and in this way they are also introduced to the scale factor (scale of reduction).

With the help of the teacher, the plan of the school and the school yard is made. This allows students to understand that the scale of reduction depends on the size of the object or surface we want to draw. On the drawing sheet or notebook, the northern part is always marked on the top of the sheet, the east on the right, the west on the left and the south on the bottom of the sheet.

e) Getting familiar with the geographical map

The next step in recognizing and reading a geographical map is to know the meaning of cartographic colors (color of mountains, plains, fields, waters, etc.), as well as to read the cartographic signs correctly (signs for settlements, mines, bridges, roads, railways etc.).

Getting the students to know the relief, with the cartographic units as well as with the reading of the map in general is a complex and long-term process.

### **1.1.2. Contents from history**

Educational content from history is chronologically ranked from the most distant past and has a scientific character.

The concept of time is one of the greatest difficulties in mastering content from history, even the absolute knowledge of time is impossible. It is especially difficult to conceive of time in the more distant past (several centuries). Historical events cannot be understood without understanding time.

### **1.2.3. Sociological content**

Sociology as a subject is taught in secondary education, and parts of its object of study are also included in primary education. These contents are part of the curricula of Knowledge of society, history, civic culture, etc.

The main sociological concepts that are realized in the classroom are: human society, social groups, social relations and democracy. Students should know and understand that society is an organized social community, where there are certain rules and norms of behavior and activity of that community.

To properly form a concept of society, one must start with the concrete forms of life in society, such as: family, local community, commune, state; in the higher classes with the EU and the UN too, as broader communities of people.

People join different social groups based on personal or collective interests. Such social groups are: labor organizations, political parties, various forums (of women, youth, etc.).

There are three ways to regulate interpersonal relationships: autocratic, anarchic, and democratic.

The main principle that must be respected in the processing of sociological content in primary education is the adaptation and individualization of learning based on the age of students.

### **1.2.4. Contents about culture**

The school is an active carrier of the cultural life of the district in which it is located. Teachers and students are the main carriers of cultural life at school. Content on culture is encountered in all subjects of primary education.

All the changes in nature and society that are the result of human work and activity represent culture. Culture as a notion depends on many factors, so there is no definition that would be acceptable by all environments (countries). It consists of tradition, way of life,

characteristic social values of a nation, language and other elements. We encounter culture as a syntagm that is associated with other words; the most commonly used are the syntagms: material culture, social culture and spiritual culture. Spiritual culture is more complex and more difficult to understand by primary school students. It also includes education, science and art.

#### **1.2.4.1. Education, science and art as part of culture**

*Education:* every society has its own educational goals, so education is a conditional social phenomenon.

*Science:* In the distant past the human individual was not able to understand natural phenomena. Philosophy was dealt with in all fields of knowledge, other sciences were not differentiated. With the gradual expansion of knowledge and its transmission from generation to generation, man began to adapt nature according to his own needs, always relying on scientific truths.

*Art:* People who in ancient times adorned the body, clothing, and environment in which they lived, although such adornments were of no use. In this way the human individual ennobled his life, and through these embellishments they expressed human and social meaning. Architecture, music, dance and oratory have their origins in ancient times.

Art as a human spiritual activity is mainly divided into: literary, musical and figurative art. However, each of these pieces of art is divided into other parts, for example the figurative art includes: paintings, sculptures, modeling, architecture, etc.

Popular culture is an integral part of general culture. It consists of elements that characterize the life, clothing, music, traditions and values of a people.

Methodical processing of cultural content is extremely complex because students do not have the opportunity to understand and build systematic knowledge on culture. They should be enabled to feel and experience the cultural elements, through active participation in social life (visits to museums, galleries, various cultural performances, etc.). In this way, students will more easily understand that they themselves are carriers and part of the culture.

In the realization of distance learning, the lack of practical application of the above-mentioned experiences is evident, with which the gap of educational and cultural development of students may remain permanent.

#### **1.2.5. Contents from the field of physical education**

Among the main goals of physical education are: maintaining health, developing and strengthening the body, developing all mental and physical abilities, developing various skills for physical activities, developing and strengthening moral and aesthetic characteristics, acquiring knowledge about all sports activities and games, etc. In the numerous literatures that deal with physical and health education, numerous tasks are enumerated, where as the

most important we would enumerate: hygienic tasks, biological tasks, educational tasks, functional tasks, educational tasks, aesthetic tasks, moral tasks, etc. Today's way of life forces educational systems in the countries of the world to teach this subject as a compulsory subject. This is not a coincidence, but a need, because the right growth and development of young people is related to the need for movement, specifically for physical activities.

## Conclusion

Distance learning first appeared in some Australian countries, where rare settlements on large land areas were rarely visited by teachers. Other days they communicated through other forms available, mostly over the phone. Distance learning was based on the independent way of learning and mastering the learning content, based on the students' prior training for such a process, which preparation was the basic condition for distance learning.

From this conclusion, it is clear that distance learning is more suitable for students of higher grades, while for primary school students it represents a serious problem.

Today, in addition to technical and technological development, as well as the advancement of communication platforms, the organization of distance learning confronted the implementers of curricula with many problems. Many of the teaching contents require the joint work of teachers and students, and for their realization indirect forms of work do not promise to achieve goals. Some of the content is even unfeasible, especially for lower grade students.

Health authorities calculate with different predictions for getting out of the state of pandemic. According to forecasts, the state of pandemic will be current for an indefinite period of time. This issue of uncertainty should activate the educational authorities with all the potential they possess, in searching and compiling the most appropriate programs for the realization of educational and training goals.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Ангеловски, К., *Наставниците и иновациите*, Скопје, 1985
- [2] Bognar, L., Matijević, M., *Didaktika*, Zagreb, 1996
- [3] Fullaun, M., *Ndryshimet në arsim*, Tiranë, 2003
- [4] Zylfiu, N., *Didaktika*, Prishtinë, 2001
- [5] Mandic, P., *Novacionet në mësim*, Prishtinë, 1985
- [6] Polak, V., *Didakticke inovacije i pedagogoska reforma skole*, Zagreb, 1984
- [7] Пау, Ц., *Прирачник за активна настава: Низ детските очи*, Скопје, 2004